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March 24, 2011

The Honorable Isadore Hall
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: **AB 720 (Hall)** – As Introduced 2/17/11- **OPPOSE**

Dear Assemblyman Hall:

After careful review of AB 720, the County of San Bernardino, regretfully, cannot support the bill because it would make significant changes that negatively impact how counties provide maintenance on county highways. This legislation would prohibit a county under the Uniform Construction Cost Account Act (Act) (Public Contract Code, Section 22031) from using County Road Commissioner authority granted under Public Contract Code, Section 20395. The measure would also increase from \$30,000 to \$45,000 the total cost of a project that is allowed to be performed by public agency employees and would force counties under the Act to give up Road Commissioner authority in order to retain those benefits.

The ability to choose between the Act and Road Commissioner authority gives counties flexibility to respond to county road maintenance needs and service to the public in the most timely, efficient, and cost effective manner. With over 2,768 miles of roadway stretching over 20,000 square miles through mountains, deserts, and valleys, this flexibility ensures that we are able to respond to and meet the needs of the public in maintaining the County's roadways.

Counties that utilize the flexibility of both Act procedures and the Road Commissioner authority already put larger construction projects out to bid, but use Road Commissioner authority for basic maintenance activities and responding to emergencies and natural disasters. For San Bernardino County, loss of this flexibility would, among other things, add three to six months to maintenance projects and add approximately \$400,000 per year in administrative costs for increased bidding processing and review for smaller maintenance projects.

Transportation needs far exceed revenues available. Counties do not have the resources to do what is currently needed, much less giving up important tools to keep project costs down. Given the state budget situation and poor economy, we should

The mission of the government of the County of San Bernardino is to satisfy its customers by providing service that promotes the health, safety, well being, and quality of life of its residents according to the County Charter, general laws, and the will of the people it serves.

The Honorable Isadore Hall

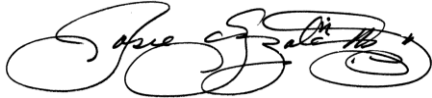
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encourage more efficient and effective uses of valuable transportation funds, not add costly requirements that will result in fewer transportation projects at higher costs, increased backlogs and deferred maintenance, and ultimately a less safe transportation network for the constituents we all serve.

For these reasons, San Bernardino County opposes AB 720. If you have any questions, please contact Josh Candelaria, Deputy Legislative Director at (909) 387-4280.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josie Gonzales", with a stylized flourish at the end.

JOSIE GONZALES

Chair, Board of Supervisors